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ECA REPORT ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES DURING THE PERIOD APRIL 1985 TO SEPTEMBER 1989

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During the period between the fourth Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs (AMSA) in March 1985 and September 1989, the ECA Secretariat undertook a number of activities in line with the social implications of the Lagos Plan of Action as well as the recommendations and resolutions of AMSA IV. The following is a summary of the activities in the following areas:

I. Social Policy, Planning and Research

II. Integrated Rural Development

III. Women

IV. Youth and Social Welfare

I. Social Policy, Planning and Research

April 1985 - April 1986

As follow up to the decisions and resolutions of the fourth Conference of African ministers of Social Affairs, the Secretariat continued to monitor social trends and social development problems in the region. Research work in this respect started in preparation for AMSA V planned for in 1987. The Secretariat also continued to collaborate and give technical support to the African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development (ACARTSOD). It participated in the sixth meeting of the Governing Board held in Nairobi, Kenya in January 1986, which approved the 1986 work program for ACARTSOD.

April 1986 - April 1987

The main activities centered around preparation for AMSA V previously planned for in 1987. In this regard, two major documents were prepared, namely:

- Survey of Social trends and major social development problems in Africa.
- Developmental social welfare in Africa.

In compliance with resolutions 4 (II) of January 1977 and 4 (IV) of March 1985 of AMSA II and AMSA IV, the Secretariat organized and serviced an intergovernmental committee meeting held in October 1986 to prepare a draft African Charter for social action. The Committee studied the draft presented by the Secretariat and made some amendments ready for presentation to AMSA V. In addition, the Secretariat continued its cooperation with ACARTSOD. It participated and provided substantive services to its technical advisory Committee in Tripoli in November 1986.

April 1987 - April 1988

The Secretariat evaluated some of the social policies in the region, assessed the current social situation and provide advisory services on strengthening social policies, planning and institutions to member States upon request. The research and evaluation of social welfare was also done

in light of the requirements of APPER and UN-PAAERD. The policies were found to be generally remedial piecemeal and inadequate to deal with the current social problems and consequently a number of strategies were identified for reorienting social welfare towards the developmental mainstream. A report based on the study titled "Social Policies and Programmes in the context of Africa's Economic Recovery and Accelerated Development" was submitted as a regional input to the global interregional consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes held in Vienna in September, 1987. The consultation adopted the guiding principles for development of Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the near future which was in turn endorsed by the fourth second session of the General Assembly for application within the work of regional commissions and other UN bodies.

At the thirteenth meeting of ECA ministers, concern over the deteriorating social situation in the continent was voiced. Consequently, in April 1987, Resolution 601 was passed that called upon member States to take urgent corrective measures; it also asked the Secretariat to lend governments all the necessary support in the formulation of appropriate policies and the design of suitable programs in social development and to report annually on the African social situation. In follow up of this the Secretariat provided technical advisory services to Ghana and Sierra Leone on planning and strengthening social policies to include especially the needs of the poor and disadvantaged groups which were particularly hit by the economic crisis.

The Secretariat also prepared a study analyzing the African social situation from 1982-1987 with appropriate recommendations for consideration by the Conference of Ministers in its 14th Meeting.

April 1988 - September 1989

In compliance with Resolution 6 (IV) of AMSA IV, a comprehensive report on the social situation in Africa was prepared following ECOSOC resolution 1987/39 of May 1987. It analyses the impact of the African Economic Crisis on social and living conditions in the 1980's as seen especially in the areas of employment incomes, food, nutrition, health and education. It also reviews the pervasive social effects on apartheid and destabilization as well as various regional conflicts. It finally indicates the new directions and strategies in social policy and planning that would be required to arrest the social deterioration and contribute to the realization of balanced and equitable socio-economic transformation.

In the ECA Economic Report 1989, a chapter on the Social Situation is included which reviews how the crises of the 1980s resulted in widespread poverty and decimated social services in most countries. It assesses current efforts and initiatives undertaken by certain countries to mitigate the problems; it also highlights the importance of adopting a holistic approach to the issues of economic reform and adjustment in order to safeguard the human dimension in a long term development perspective.

Contributions of social sector analysis were also made to the revised version of "Beyond Recovery: ECA's Revised Perspective Study of Africa's Development Prospects 1988-2008". The Study emphasizes the required enabling social environment and institutions of a new social order within the macro socio-economic framework of a self reliant and self sustaining African Economy.

In the area of health, the Secretariat made contribution by participating in the following seminars:

1. Symposium on Worlds AIDS Day, Addis Ababa organized by ECA and WHO in December 1988.
2. First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the Third Ordinary Session of the OAU Conference of African Ministers of Health in Addis Ababa in October 1988 - an inter-secretarial meeting of ECA, WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNHCR convened by the OAU.
3. Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the third Ordinary Session of the OAU Conference of African Ministers of Health in Kampala, Uganda in February 1989.
4. First Meeting of WHO collaborating Centers for Traditional Medicine in the African Region on "Policies and Strategies for use of Traditional Health Technologies in Primary Health Care" in Niamey, Niger in February 1989 organized by WHO.
5. Third Ordinary Session of the OAU Conference of African Ministers of Health in Kampala, Uganda in 1989.

II. Integrated Rural Development Activities

April 1985 - April 1986

In attempt to promote the development of rural life, institutions and economy, the secretariat believes that the cooperative movement can play a vital role. To this effect a paper titled "Role of rural cooperatives in the productive sectors in Africa: Synthesis Paper" was prepared.

Three country studies on the "Impact of rural technology and national technological policies on food production, productivity employment and income level and distribution were carried out.

The Secretariat also participated in the activities of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Task Force on Rural Development and attended its annual meeting in New York in March 1985. It also made two contributions to the Newsletter of the ACC Task Force on Rural Development.

April 1986 - April 1987

In line with AMSA IV recommendation that interdisciplinary technical advisory teams should be set up to evaluate varied approaches of rural development at regional levels in collaboration with other organizations, the secretariat organized a Regional Expert Consultation on the Impact of Technology on Rural Development in Africa in August 1986. It was attended by experts from nine member States and the Consultation came up with the following recommendations for member States:

1. Formulation of explicit overall national technology policies with well defined objectives. Objectives may include the development and dissemination of technology which stress utilization of indigenous factor endowments.
2. Increase of existing allocation of resources for science and technology to 1 per cent GDP.
3. Exploitation of irrigation potential by utilizing irrigation facilities and increasing area of irrigation.
4. Launching of national grass-root farm credit schemes that are accessible to all rural income groups.

Other activities included publication of two issues of Rural Progress with the themes "International Year of Peace", and "Drought and Desertification in Africa".

April 1987 - April 1988

Two issues of Rural Progress were produced titled: "Role of Production cooperation in Africa" and "The International Year of Shelter." After a survey on the readership of the journal that showed considerable interest, there were considerations to improve the technical contents in order to widen its coverage.

In conformity with AMSA IV recommendations for interdisciplinary technical assistance at regional level, an inter-disciplinary mission was sent to Liberia at their request to advise the government on ways of developing the rural sector potential. After several discussion with government authorities, the following recommendations were made:

a) Liberia being rural, transformation of rural sector must be equated with national development and given the highest priority.
b) Allocation of internal resources and supplementary, foreign aid should reflect this.

c) Policy decisions should be taken to transfer resources to the rural sector to promote parity between the rural and urban sectors and reduce rural urban migration of the young.

d) Modernization of rural sector and increase of productivity in agriculture.

e) The Ministry of Rural Development should be replaced by a National Rural Development Authority located in the office of the President.

In addition, two projects were approved by the Project Analysis and Appraisal Committee titled:

1. Strengthening Financial Institutions of rural Africa and provision of credit for agricultural and other income generating activities in five selected countries (1990-1994).

2. Regional Workshop on the evaluation of experiences in ten rural development projects in Africa.

These two projects to strengthen financial institutions of rural Africa are contingent on availability of extra budgetary resources.

April 1988 - September 1989

Studies on modalities of popular participation in selected African countries were made which led to the following conclusions:

1. To avoid conflict between government representatives and village leaderships, traditional village decision making process must be accommodated.

2. Beneficiaries of programmes and projects must participate at all levels of decision making.

3. A degree of local power must be present in all programmes in order for people to participate fully.

Two issues of Rural Progress were also published with the following themes: (i) technical change in rural development and the development of the livestock sector. (ii) Structural adjustment, decentralization, rural energy sources and institution building.

The Secretariat participated in the activities of ACC Task Force on Rural Development by submitting a progress report on ECA's rural development activities and a contribution to its Rural Development Newsletter.

III. Women

April 1985 - April 1986

The Secretariat focussed attention on training opportunities for women in order to ensure their meaningful participation in development as per recommendations of AMSA IV. A series of workshops and related activities at national and subregional levels were held as follows:

1. Seminar to improve statistics and indicators on women held at Harare, Zimbabwe in May 1985.
2. Subregional executive development seminar for women managers in Arusha in June 1985.
3. Subregional seminar on management and development planning for women in Arusha in September 1985.
4. Advisory and consultancy services in 8 countries.
5. Two entrepreneurship training workshops for English speaking countries in Kenya in 1985 and 1986.
6. Similar entrepreneurship training workshops for French speaking countries in Côte d'Ivoire in February and July 1985.
7. Subregional workshop on women's effective participation in activities of the United Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade in Lilongwe in January 1986.
8. Workshop on new role of women in the use of modern appropriate technology in production, processing, conservation and marketing of foodstuffs in February 1986.
9. Follow up workshops of No. 8 in East and Southern as well as Central subregions in June 1985.
10. National Training seminar on administration and cooperative management in Kinshasa in June 1985.
11. Inter-regional workshop on the development and management of women's textile and garment cooperatives in November 1985 in Bamako, Mali.
12. Continuation of project on training in optional nutritional use of donated food for relief and food-for-work activities in Ethiopia.
13. Participation in World Conference in Nairobi in July 1985; brochures and posters distributed.
14. Meetings of the subregional committees on integration of women in development for the Lusaka, Gisenyi, Yaounde and Niamey MULPOCs.
15. Several studies completed and published; Newsletters in Portuguese in addition to English and French.

April 1986 - April 1987

The Secretariat focused on activities that related to Resolutions 579(XXI) to impress upon African planners to provide sustained support to women's activities at all levels, increase resources for their programmes and reiterate the key role of women in Africa's socio-economic recovery as required by resolution 580(XXI). The activities were as follows:

1. Advisory services and technical backstopping to national machineries for the integration of women in 15 different countries.

2. National seminar on project preparation in 1986 at Bujumbura.

3. Seminar for lusophone countries on project planning in Guinea-Bissau in 1986.

4. Eight officials sponsored from four countries to a course on planning, management and evaluation of rural development projects at the Pan African Institute for Development at Kabwe, Zambia.

5. National seminar on evaluation of national machineries to ensure that concerns of Rwandese women were responded to in Rwanda in 1986.

6. Meetings of subregional MULPOC Committees in Gisenyi, Lusaka, Yaounde, and Niamey to monitor progress made to set priorities for the sub-regions in April 1987.

7. Two subregional seminars on: role of women in marketing of foodstuff in Bangui, Central African Republic in October 1986 and in Cotonou in December 1986 on the role of co-operatives in integrating women into development.

8. Data was collected on participation of women in agricultural development in drought affected countries of Madagascar and Mauritius. In Ethiopia the Secretariat continued implementation of the project on training in optimal nutrition of donated food.

9. To enhance women's management and entreprenerial skills a training workshop on small-scale business management particularly of agro-industries was held in Nairobi in October 1986. Also subregional workshops for trainers of women entrepreneurs were held in Arusha and Nairobi in July 1986 and August 1986 respectively. Another subregional seminar on measures to improve women's management skills was held in Nairobi in July 1987.

10. Research activities included survey on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, a study on the strengthening of the capabilities of national machineries and information kit on the integration of women in development in Africa. There was also a seminar in Bujumbura on improvement of women's research techniques.

11. Women's role as food producers was recognized and reiterated in the Priority Programme for Economic Recovery.

April 1987 - April 1988

Efforts were concentrated on research and training activities designed to increase women's capabilities to enable them to plan an active and efficient role in national development in accordance with the Arusha and Nairobi forward looking strategies for the advancement of women and the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development.

Activities were therefore as follows:

1. Advisory services in 5 different countries to ensure that multisectorial programmes and projects formulated at country level reflect women's needs.

2. Two studies were completed entitled: "Participation of women in development as agents and beneficiaries in Ghana" and "A Survey on Women in Mauritius" designed to provide planners and decision-makers with a data base.

3. A Seminar on Project planning and evaluation was held in Kinshasa for women responsible for developing women's projects.

4. Two-week study tour to Ghana was organized for business women and women project managers from Eastern and Southern African subregion. They shared experience in developing small scale enterprises concerned particularly in production, processing, preservation and marketing of foodstuffs.

5. Three women from Comoros and Djibouti went to Kinshasa for training in co-operative management.

6. A subregional management training seminar was organized in May 1987 in Rwanda for women from the Great Lakes Countries engaged in production or trade activities.

7. A Seminar on the development of cottage industry was held in Kigali, Rwanda on promotion of small concerns.

8. A training project on the optimal nutritional use of food donated to Ethiopia was implemented in two settlements.

9. A bi-annual newsletter, ATRCW Update, was published.

10. A study on women as small-scale entrepreneurs in Zambia, Cameroon and Ghana was published; it pinpointed difficulties confronting women and made recommendations.

11. An evaluation of the ECA programme for the integration of women in development at the subregional level was carried out by a joint team from UNDP, ARCC and ECA.

Major recommendations included:

a) Maintaining MULPOC as focal point for the subregional programme.

b) Concentrating on the training of trainers.

c) Ensuring a monitoring system in training programmes to collect feedback from the participants.

April 1988 - September 1989

The Secretariat in continuation of its efforts to ensure inclusion of women's issues in development planning carried out the following activities:

1. Ad hoc expert group meeting to draw guidelines for the incorporation of women's concerns in national development plans was held in Addis Ababa in November 1988.

2. A Seminar on project formulation and implementation for Portuguese speaking women was organized in Sao Tome and Principe in May 1988.

3. To enhance women's skills and employment opportunities, three projects were retained:

   a) improving the role of women in the informal sector;

   b) improving women's access to credit through training in management and credit techniques;

   c) training in optimal nutrition use of donated food for relief.

4. Research was began in Burkina Faso, the Congo, the Gambia and Zambia on the economic, legal and political environments in which women operate in the informal sector. The studies should determine the policy options available to decision-makers for improving the working conditions of women.

5. A subregional seminar on measures to improve women's management skills was organized in Douala, Cameroon in December 1988. The purpose was to: a) examine existing management training programmes and the environment in which women managers work; b) promote exchanges between trainers and extension workers involved in women's activities.

6. To disseminate information on African women, two issues of the bulletin ATRCW Update were published in June and December 1988.

7. Case studies were undertaken on the role of women in agro-industries in Botswana, Lesotho, Tanzania and Zimbabwe and on women managers in the informal sector in Kenya, Mauritius, Swaziland and Zambia. The studies showed that formal and informal structures established by government and non-government organizations exist to train and encourage women to enter into the industrial sector. However, obstacles impeding women's full participation are inherent to their female status as well as absence of adequate policies in the informal sector.

8. A Study on women and scientific professions in Africa was carried out showing the degree of participation of young women in scientific training programmes and ways to encourage them to enter such fields.

9 A Study on changing socio-economic conditions of women in the context of the Nairobi forward-looking strategies for the Advancement of Women was done. The findings were reported to the twenty-fourth Session of the Commission / Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa in order to pinpoint areas needing increased effort by member States.

10. The Tenth meeting of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee for the Integration of Women in Development organized in Addis Ababa in March 1989 recommended greater emphasis on women in scientific and technical fields and on their access to credit and that a study be prepared on the flow of resources for women in the context of the food and debt crisis.

IV. Youth and Social Welfare

April 1985 - April 1986

A. Youth

The Secretariat concentrated its activities on the objective of the International Youth Year by doing the following:

1. Compiled the Directory of Youth Organization in Africa with view to facilitating communication between the United Nations and youth organizations, and also among youth organizations themselves.
2. Information was collected and disseminated on twelve national co-ordinating committees for the year.

In addition, three proposals aimed at calling special attention to the needs aspirations and problems of youth were prepared as recommended by AMSA V as well as the executive secretaries of regional commissions on the promotion of TCDC/ ECDC of February 1985 in Addis Ababa. The project proposals were:

a) Promotion of employment opportunities for young people in rural areas.

b) African Youth.

c) Thirty-minute 16 millimetre motivational film on the role of African youth in socio-economic development.

B. The Disabled

The Secretariat continued to promote the objectives of the UN Decade for the Disabled Persons (1988-1992) and the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons by preparing two project documents on:

a) Survey of available resources, programmes and facilities for disbility prevention and rehabilitation.

b) Research on the causes, types and incidents of impairments and disability in African countries.

The two proposals were submitted for funding.

April 1986 - April 1987

A. Youth

Two reports were prepared, one on the activities on the International Youth Year, and on the Implementation of the African Regional Plan of Action on Youth. To assist governments in the strengthening of youth policies and programmes and in conformity with recommendations of AMSA IV, two advisory missions were undertaken to the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

B. The Disabled

The Secretariat continued to promote the objectives of the UN Decade for Disabled Persons and the Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons. In this respect, the following was achieved:

1. A report on the Implementation of the world programme of action concerning the Disabled Persons in African coutnries.
2. A proposal for a Regional Programme of action for Disabled Persons in African countries.

C. United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI)

The Secretariat participated actively in the launching of UNAFRI in March 1986. It participated in expert meetings on the Establishment of UNAFRI in New York in September 1986. While awaiting the selection of host country the interim secretariats of the Institute was set up in ECA in January 1987. The ECA Secretariat was therefore very actively involved in the launching of UNAFRI and a progress report was presented to the thirteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers in 1987.

April 1987 - April 1988

A. Youth

The Secretariat's activities focused on issues concerning the participation of youth in development. Activities during this period included:

1. Participation in the Expert Group meeting on the Development of the UN Standards on the Prevention of Juvenile Deliquency in Saudi Arabia in February 1988.
2. Participation in the Interregional Preparatory meeting on the Prevention of Delinquency, Juvenile Justice and the Protection of the Young: Policy approaches and Direction held in Vienna, Austria in April 1988.
3. Organization of two training seminars in Addis Ababa on Planning for crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the context of development and the Prevention and Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency.

4. A report entitled: "Progress Report in Social Development" during the period April 1985 to March 1987 for consideration in AMSA V.

B. The Disabled

In the interest of Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, and the Decade for Disabled Persons as well as AMSA IV recommendations concerning Disabled Persons, the following activities were carried out:

1. Participation in the Meeting of Experts to Review the Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons held in Stockholm in August 1987. The meeting recommended inter alia that higher priority be given to the promotion of the Decade of Disabled Persons and to the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons.

2. A newletter "Equal Time" was launched and circulated to promote awareness of the needs of the disabled as well as to serve as a medium for the exchange of information, experience and ideas on and about the disabled and the various activities undertaken in African countries for their benefit.

C. UN African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders

Pursuant, to the General Assembly resolution 40/35 entitled "Development of Standards for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders to be held in 1990, the following activities were carried out by the Secretariat:

1. Mission to Uganda and Zambia to discuss the possibility of becoming the host country for UNAFRI.

2. Prepared a draft agreement for the prospective host country of UNAFRI anticipated to be selected during the ECA Conference of Ministers. Also prepared draft statute establishing the Institute as a legal entity for consideration by the ECA Conference of Ministers.

3. Preparation of a report on UNAFRI at the end of the initial period for the UNDP that had financed its activities during this phase.

4. Preparation of a project document soliciting long-term funding of UNAFRI which was submitted to UNDP for consideration.

5. Preparation of a document on adaptation of the UN Manual for the development of crime statistics in African countries for a meeting of experts in 1988.

April 1988 - September 1989

A. Youth

The Secretariat completed the Directory of Youth Organization in African countries which was circulated to appropriate member States as well as to individuals and bodies involved with youth. A study on the impact of rural youth employment programmes on rural development was completed and circulated in member States.

A report on the Survey of juvenile delinquency crime and justice in the light of socio-economic conditions was prepared using case studies. The secretariat also participated in the seminar on street children organized by the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Addis Ababa in December 1988. Finally the secretariat prepared a project document on sports activites as an essential element in the full development of youth and submitted for funding.

B. The Disabled

Efforts in the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons and in the Promotion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons 1983-1992 continued. A Directory of Institutions, Associations and Organizations for Disabled Persons in African countries was completed and distributed to relevent organizations etc... The special issue of Equal Time was issued and circulated.

C. UNAFRI

The ECA Conference of Ministers adopted the statute establishing UNAFRI in April 1988. Twenty four member States signed the Statute. Uganda was chosen as the host country and the agreement finalized. The assessed contribution from member States was established at the inaugural meeting of the Governing Board in June 1989.

The Secretariat participated in the 10th Session of the Committee on Crime Prevention and Control held in Vienna in August 1988. It also participated in the Inter-Agency Meeting on Follow up to the seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in Vienna in September 1988.

Contact with institutes in other regions was also maintained.

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